
DIGEST

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HB 211 Reengrossed

2026 Regular Session

Villio

Abstract: Provides relative to the creation, administration, and eligibility requirements of the Homelessness Court program.

Proposed law authorizes each district court by rule to designate one or more divisions as a Homelessness Court program to which participants are assigned. Further permits each district court to establish a probation program to be administered by the presiding judge or judges thereof or by an employee designated by the court.

Proposed law defines "Homelessness Court program" and "participant".

Proposed law provides for all of the following relative to the program:

- (1) The purpose, goals, and creation.
- (2) Participation eligibility, screening, and assessments.
- (3) Probationary and program conditions.
- (4) The right of the defendant to be represented by legal counsel in all hearings.
- (5) The duties of the defendant, the court, and of the district attorney.
- (6) Disposition of the defendant upon satisfactory completion of or failure to complete the program.

Proposed law creates the crime of unauthorized camping on public property and provides that this crime is the intentional use of any tent, shelter, or bedding constructed or arranged for the purpose of or in such a way to permit overnight use on public property that is not a designated campground.

Proposed law defines "designated campgrounds" and "public property".

Proposed law provides for penalties as follows:

- (1) On a first conviction, a fine of not more than \$500, imprisonment for not more than six months, or both.

- (2) On a second or subsequent conviction, a fine of not more than \$1,000 and imprisonment with or without hard labor for not less than one year nor more than two years.

Proposed law provides that an offender who violates proposed law may be eligible for the Homelessness Court program, if such a program is available in the jurisdiction and the offender meets all of the requirements set forth in proposed law for participation in the program.

Proposed law provides for a statement of legislative intent and defines "department" with respect to the La. Dept. of Health (LDH) and "public camping".

Proposed law prohibits any political subdivision from permitting or otherwise allowing any person to regularly engage in public camping on a public property, including but not limited to a public building or its grounds or a public right-of-way under the jurisdiction of the political subdivision.

Proposed law authorizes a political subdivision, by majority vote of the political subdivision's governing body, to designate property owned by the political subdivision or a municipality within the boundaries of the political subdivision to be used for a continuous period of no longer than one year for the purposes of public camping subject to certain conditions.

Proposed law provides for duties of the LDH.

Proposed law requires the political subdivision to notify the LDH within 10 days of designating property for public camping in accordance with procedures established by LDH.

Proposed law requires a political subdivision to establish and maintain minimum standards and procedures for certain enumerated purposes related to any political subdivision or municipal property that is designated for public camping. Further provides for dissemination of these minimum standards and procedures on the website of the political subdivision within 30 days of designation.

Proposed law provides for duties of the state fire marshal.

Present law (R.S. 44:4.1(B)(6)) provides for a list of exemptions from public disclosure of certain information contained in present law (Title 13 of the La. R.S.).

Proposed law retains present law and adds the registration and other records of a treatment facility pertaining to the Homelessness Court program.

Proposed law relative to the Homelessness Court program, the crime of unauthorized camping on public property, and the public records exception becomes effective upon the governor's signature.

Proposed law relative to the prohibition, procedures, and enforcement pertaining to public camping becomes effective on Jan. 1, 2027.

(Amends R.S. 44:4.1(B)(6); Adds R.S. 13:5381-5386, R.S. 14:107.6, and R.S. 40:581.1-582)

Summary of Amendments Adopted by House

The Committee Amendments Proposed by House Committee on Judiciary to the original bill:

1. Authorize LDH to promulgate and adopt regulations regarding licensed group homes.
2. Eliminate enforcement provisions permitting parties to bring a civil action and receive awards of penalties, attorney fees, and expenses against a political subdivision or municipality to enjoin a violation of law.
3. Provide respective effective dates of proposed law.

The House Floor Amendments to the engrossed bill:

1. Make technical changes.